

1509/1388
THE

ISLAND of St. MARGUERITE,

AN

O P E R A,

IN

TWO ACTS,

AND FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE,

On FRIDAY, November 13, 1789.

SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. DEBRET, opposite BURLINGTON
House, PICCADILLY.

M,DCC,XC.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor of the following Piece knows that the Author considered his production as a trifle ; but a trifle, which, with beautiful music and theatrical decorations, might contribute to the entertainment of the Public. That he was not mistaken, is evident from the event. The singular story of the man in the Iron Mask, at first confined in the Isle of St. Marguerite, was not deemed by Voltaire beneath the dignity of history ; and crowded audiences have thought it worthy of their attention. The subject, however proper for the Stage, was not free from difficulties. The Author, as appears from his prologue, knows the value of liberty, and, consequently, could not withhold his applause from a people struggling for a free constitution : but delicacy required that even the appearance of any thing that might be construed into an insult to a foreign country should

should be avoided. To steer through those opposite extremes seems to have been the design throughout the piece; and when the pruning hand of authority proscribed certain passages, the Author submitted chearfully, though in all probability more was lost in spirit, than gained in decency, by such corrections.

The Editor will only add, that he hopes he need not apologize to the Author for the liberty he takes in presenting to the Reader Scenes, which have been received with so much favour, and which probably will continue for some time in a course of representation.

PICCADILLY,
Nov. 30th, 1789.



P R O L O G U E.

By the A U T H O R.

Spoken by Mr. B A N N I S T E R, Jun.

T H I S night we celebrate a heroe's fame,
Who liv'd—we know not where—nor what his name;
Bourbon, Vermandois, Monmouth, and Beaufort,
All these are in the list, and many more;
Much paper, pens, and ink, are spent to scan
This curious riddle—yet no mortal can;
Perhaps, because that there was no such man—
To fierce biographers we leave that strife,
We answer only for his mimic life:—
What need we care whether he liv'd in fact,
If he but live throughout our second act?
Yet all will guess, and each is in the right;
Some make him prince, some peer, some brown,
some white;
Tho' few, I think, wou'd know him well at sight—
No matter who he was—*The Prologue's task*
Is to put on, not to pull off, the mask.—
Then let his visage, wrapt in iron case,
As hard, as cold, as any critic's face,
Here oft revisit, clad in complete steel,
To spur and whet our almost-blunted zeal,
To guard the blessings of our public weal:
Wisely to guard that health which wants no cure,
Nor, fancied ills to shun, true woes ensure;
No need for strong restoratives we feel,
For caustic fire, or amputating steel.—
Oh! blessed isle, to whom by birth 'tis given,
To own the choicest gifts of bounteous Heaven!
Thou precious stone, set in the silver sea,
Begirt with plenty, peace, and liberty!

Thou

PROLOGUE.

Thou fortrefs made by Nature's magic wand
To guard her children 'gainft Infection's hand—
Oh ! like the fun, thy warmth and light difpenfe
With undiminifh'd rays and influence.
Nations of freemen yet unborn fhall own
Thee parent of their rights—Thou, who alone,
By ftorms furrounded, fix'd on Albion's rock,
With pity from on high beholdft the fhock
Of jarring elements—thyfelf at reft,
Confcious that thou, above all nations bleft,
Free from revolt alike and flavifh awe,
Art doubly fafe where LIBERTY IS LAW!





DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Mask,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Kelly.
<i>Commandant,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Turnkey,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Suet.
<i>Officer,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Sedgwick.
<i>Thomas,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Banks.
<i>Lawyer,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Waldron.
				Mr. Hollingsworth.
				Mr. Jones.
<i>Characters in the Mob,</i>	-			Mr. Webbe.
				Mr. Fairbrother.
				Mr. Lyons.

A N D

<i>Jonas,</i>	-	-	-	Mr. Bannister, Junr.
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W O M E N.

<i>Nannette,</i>	-	-	-	Miss Romanzini.
<i>Abbeſs,</i>	-	-	-	Mrs. Edwards.
<i>Tereſa,</i>	-	-	-	Mrs. Fox.
<i>Nuns, Miss Hagley, Miss Barnes, Miss Stageldoir.</i>				

A N D

<i>Carline,</i>	-	-	-	Mrs. Crouch.
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THE
ISLAND OF ST. MARGUERITE.

A C T I.

SCENE I. *A Convent.*

Nuns, Nannette, &c.

SOLO and CHORUS.

JOIN the chorus, raise the song,
With one accord salute and hail
The fair maid ; oh ! may she long
Adorn our convent's holy veil.

Hither, Carline, haste, repair,
Fly to the seat of tranquil joy ;
Haste, the holy veil prepare,
And heavenly scenes that never cloy.
Join the chorus, &c.

Hence all mortal cares prophane,
Unchaste desires, and worldly love ;
Hence from Virtue's sacred reign
All love but that of heaven above.
Join the chorus, &c.

Enter Abbess.

Abbess. Thanks to you all, my loving family!
Your joy on this accession to our house
Has prov'd your zeal for the success and honour
Of our sisterhood.

Teresa. We but perform our duty when with joy
We celebrate the entrance of a fair
And pious Nun—But may I not enquire
Who is this beauteous novice, and from whence
We boast this prize?

Abbess. A prize she is indeed,
Tho' her condition humble, for that serves
Only to shew her personal excellence
In brighter colours.—Hitherto she liv'd
The adopted child of an old honest tenant,
Who holds his farm of our good patroness.

Teresa. And came she recommended by the Countess?

Abbess. Most earnestly, as one whose innocence
Was threatened by the snares of a great Lord,
Who own'd a castle near her father's cottage,
The same who is lately made the Commandant
Of all this island of St. Marguerite—
But see, she comes.

Enter Carline.

My lovely Carline, we have some time delay'd
The final rites. You come, I trust, prepar'd
To accept the veil; we were engag'd, my child,
In celebrating your admission.

Car. I knew the cause of your festivity,
And heard the accents of your ill-tim'd joy;
I am a bad dissembler, and must own,
My heart still sickens at the sight of all
I see, and every hour still adds disgust.

Abbess. Was it for this I condescended to receive
A peasant from a farmer's humble cottage,
Who knew not her own parents?

Car. Yes, I own,
That precious secret is withheld; alas!
That mystery claims pity, not reproach.
Tho' bred 'midst rocks, obscurity my nurse,
And my companions, save old Maturin,
But one, and he now lost—



——— *Abbess.* By what mischance——

Car. The worst, as 'twas unknown; for what known
ill

Can equal all that anxious fear invents? —
One morn the youth who shar'd my slender fortune,
Old Maturin's brave son, whom I, from use
And long familiarity, call'd brother,
(Tho' my affections glow'd with brighter flames,)
Went to the daily chase.—But, oh! the night,
The watchful night, nor all the tedious days,
Have since restor'd him.

S O N G. (Carline.)

To thy woods, dear Auvergne, then adieu!
And adieu to the sound of thy rocks,
And adieu to the youth whom in childhood I knew,
Who in dreams my fond fancy still mocks.

Forget my fond hopes and my love?
Forget the dear cause of my pain?
My strain shall invoke him wherever I rove,
And my voice shall be heard to complain.

Abbess. Such dismal airs, my Carline, will not mend
Your spirits, love; a little privacy
May reconcile you to your state. Cheer up,
Banish, my dear, this melancholy mood.

[Enter a Nun and whispers *Abbess.*

Car. Banish my grief by solitude, heigh ho!
An excellent receipt for gaiety.

Abbess. The Commandant! that must not be! oh!
no!

Of all men living, he is the last to be
Admitted to the sight of my new charge.
And yet how to deny—I dread his power—
'Twere best for me not to be seen by him. } *Aside.*

Nannette, on no account permit Carline
To see the Commandant—We must be gone—
Nannette, you and Teresa may attend
Our refractory novice to her closet,
And try the force of your persuasion;—

Carline, you may retire. [Exit *Abbess and Nuns.*

Car. I must, you mean, and go
To court affliction, penance, and feign'd woe,
Solicit sighs till tears in earnest flow.

TRIO.

TRIO. Carline, Teresa, and Nannette.

Carline.

Ah! who knows from this sad prison
When I shall again return.

Nannette.

Ah! why call you this a prison
When you've sworn with zeal you burn?

Teresa.

From your promise and decision,
Carline, surely you'd not turn.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Room in the Convent.*

Enter Commandant and Nannette.

Nan. Sir, I tell you again and again, that my Lady Abbess is not at home. I wonder you will persist in this manner. You will find nothing here but a house full of Nuns.

Com. And is not that sufficient, my pretty little turnkey?

Nan. Why you would not, surely, force yourself into the Nuns' apartment?

Com. But indeed I would;—come, come, don't try to look so cross; those good-humour'd little eyes but ill become the office of Cerberus. Have not you the key, now, of that old Gothic door?

Nan. Lord, Sir! what do you take me for?

Com. For a charming little angel, just going to open the gates of Paradise.

Nan. No such angel, I assure you; if you wait till then you'll be heartily tired of Purgatory.

Com. But Nannette, if I were to sink a little in my demands, and only request to see one of the beauties in your Paradise, and that only a novice?

Nan. Oh, Carline, the beautiful Carline, no doubt. Not for the world, Sir; never will she come out of that door any more, believe me.

Com. But that need not hinder my seeing her, if it were only thro' the grate—You know—

Nan.

Nan. On no account—indeed I will not—she is not to be seen—I can't stay—I have not the key.

Com. (*Hanging his purse on the door.*) But suppose I shou'd have it now, hey Nannette?

Nan. Why thro' the grate, to be sure, there's not much harm.

Com. Nannette—hey?

Nan. (*taking the purse*) Well, for once—You'll promise secrecy—Only thro' the grate.—I'll watch without; this will open the first door—Only thro' the grate.

[*Exit Nannette.*]

Commandant rings.

Second Door opens, and Carline appears through a Grate.

Car. Who's there? What means this bold intrusion?

Com. Thy slave, fair angel; thy deliverer.

Car. Deliverer! Alas all hopes of my deliverance are vain.

Com. 'Tis not in nature to confine thee thus. No rose e'er shed its fragrance in the desert, no pearl its lustre in the sea, no diamond under——

Car. O Sir! this is fine language — Roses in deserts, pearls in the sea, and diamonds in caverns—fine similes, but not quite new. Now, if a Commandant of the castle shou'd be the instrument of Liberty, that wou'd be new indeed.

Com. My life is at your command.—I'll lose it or release you, if you will deign to accept my services.

Car. On condition that you build no farther presumption on my acceptance — but I fear they will be very ineffectual.

Com. Had you but some disguise——

Car. I still have luckily retain'd the dress with which I us'd to join my brother's chase, clad like himself.

Com. Most happily conceiv'd.—Prepare yourself for flight; a moment lost may ruin all—Watch well the window of your cell; there soon you'll hear me, my sweet Angel!—Hark! I fear we may be watch'd.

Car. Away! away!

Com. For one short moment, then, adieu! adieu! this, then, for safety. (*Shuts both doors.*) [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE III. *An Apartment in the Castle.**Enter Turnkey and Thomas.*

Turn. Well, Thomas, is every thing prepar'd? are all the dainty dishes serv'd? and wines of the best qualities, to suit the palate of our noble pris'ner?

Tho. Alas! all this is to little purpose; he has no stomach for any of these delicacies—you may change them every day if you please, as often as he changes his fine linen and laced ruffles, but you'll never hit his taste.

Turn. The iron mask he wears is no incumbrance to him at his meals?

Tho. No, no; that is no impediment to his eating, unless, poor man, he takes it so grievously to heart, that he loaths his food.

Turn. He must surely be a person of great consequence—the Commandant never sits down in his presence. But it is not safe for us to be too inquisitive; I can't, however, help observing, that in spite of all the respect with which he is treated, something hangs upon his mind that makes him more and more melancholy every day.

Tho. Tho' I have been long accustomed to dismal scenes in this place, my heart aches whenever I see him.

Turn. It is time for me to attend the Commandant: but see, our prisoner comes from his inner apartment; we must retire. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter the Mask.

Mask. Was not the measure full? robb'd of my rights,
Secreted in my childhood, and debas'd;
My very name denied me; and all means
Of proving my fair lineage rendered vain:
Nay more, not only am I here confin'd,
But in this curs'd disguise; and worst of ills,
Here I'm for ever barr'd the sight of all I love.

Enter Commandant.

Com. Sir, I attend your pleasure, and entreat
Your orders to provide for every thing
Your taste or fancy can suggest.

Mask.

Mask. At your hands, Sir, I may accept
These marks of kindness and respect, but not
As an atonement for these injuries.

Com. Name but your wants; whatever luxuries
This town affords are yours.

Mask. Sir, all the luxuries of France were well
Exchang'd for one grain of that luxury,
Without which all the rest soon nauseate,
Sweet liberty, the first, best right of man.

Com. Wou'd it were in my power—but, Sir, my life's
Responsible if you are known. Therefore,
Pardon the caution which I use per force.
Thus, with your leave, farewell. [Exit.]

Mask. His life responsible if I'm discovered! Ha!
My own, then, surely more so—This respect;—
My splendid entertainment in this prison;—
Ill-omen'd favours!—be they what they may,
I'll risque the attempt. Thus I'll inscribe my name,
And thus to fortune trust it.

[Writes his name on the plate, and throws it out
of the window.]

A I R.

There my last die is thrown;
Now all my hopes are flown;
 There hangs my fate.
The drowning wretch thus clings to ev'ry reed,
And from his suff'rings by death alone is freed.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV. *View of the Castle.*

Enter Jonas in his Boat.

SONG. (Jonas.)

Oh dear! Oh dear, no hopes for Jonas.
Alas! thou sighst in vain, poor Jonas.
Nannette's hard heart doth Jonas hate.
Ah! thank thyself for thy fate;
Ah! curse on thy logger pate.
Was ever such a wretched dangler!
Thou needst the patience of an angler,
With rod and line to wait and wait;
Ah! Nannette never will be thy mate—
No, she's too cunning to bite at thy bait.

C

I've

I've learnt to spear or tickle a trout ;
 But alas ! in love I'm but a lout,
 An oyster, cross'd in love, may be ;
 Ah ! 'tis all in vain, I see ;
 Ah ! Nannette is not for me.
 Cou'd I but catch her in my net,
 I'd teach the haughty Miss Nannette
 No more to call me—thou Booby :
 Ah ! Jonas, Jonas, she laughs at thee,
 'Cause Jonas can't say his A B C.

Jonas. Here have I, man and boy, these fifteen years
 been fisherman ; and my best customers—these Nuns—
 a pretty little fry ;—heigh ho !—cou'd I but catch my
 Nannette thus (*throwing his net.*) Oh la ! what a fine
 lass our Abbess has hook'd ; I saw her thro' the window,
 peering round to find a hole to creep out, like the eels
 in my well boat.—Odds fish, what's here ?—it shines
 like a dead mackarel. A silver plate, this will be a nice
 present for Nannette—Slife, I'd better not touch it ; 'tis
 some bait to catch poor folks, and clap 'em up in this
 old dungeon.

Enter Turnkey.

Turn. Who is there ? Master Jonas, what have you
 got there ?

Jonas. Only a fish.

Turn. A silver plate—where did you find this, Sir ?

Jonas. Here it lay in the ditch, as flat as a flounder,
 glistening all one as a dead roach in the sun.

Turn. My friend, you'll soon be dead as any roach,
 but not in the sun, for you must be my guest, and our
 black hole is not troubled much with the sun: come
 along, you thief. Holoa ! [*Enter soldiers.*]

SOLO and CHORUS. *Jonas and Soldiers.*

Soldiers.

Come, come, come away.
 What do you do here ?
 Come, Come, come away.

Jonas.

Hear poor Jonas, hear.
 Hear me, Sirs, I pray.

Soldiers.

Soldiers.

Come, come, no more delay.

Jonas.

Oh drag me not! oh stay.

Enter Commandant.

Com. What's all this noise and riot?

Turn. A thief! that's all, Sir, not worth your honour's notice, only some business for us underlings, whipping, or burning, or hanging, or such little perquisites, that's all—We found him with that plate.

Com. Give it to me.—By Heavens the very plate he is serv'd upon—And here is his name inscrib'd. Ruin, I'm lost! [*Aside.*—Lead him to instant death—But first apply your sharpest tortures to produce confession—The question, ordinary and extraordinary.—But stay—a word with him myself.—Come hither. Has no one seen this plate but you?

Jonas. No, your honour.

Com. Know you this writing?

Jonas. Writing? Sink or swim, not I—I never learnt to read and write.

Com. So you cannot read?

Turn. Read! Faith this is the question extraordinary indeed. [*Aside.*]

Jonas. Sure your honour won't hang a man till he is dead, dead as a herring, 'cause he can't read.

Com. No, that is the thing that saves you.—You may release him, and yourselves begone.

Turn. Well, here is a man excus'd 'cause he can't read—Now in England a man is hanged for the same reason—I thought a man was not entitled to his benefit of clergy unless he cou'd read.

Jonas. Why, friend Turnkey, who wou'd have thought that you were such a clerk? such a lumination of the law? Why you're as full of light as the electrical eel—But I believe your light chiefly lies in the practice of the law.

Turn. Well, while I live, no man shall catch me reading.

[*Exeunt Turnkey and Soldiers.*]

Com. Now you are in safety, tell us where you found this plate, my man.—

Jonas. Right under that small grate, so high in that round tower; I was beneath searching for eels as usual in the ditch.

Com. Your business then makes you acquainted with these premises?

Jonas. Aye, many a year.

Com. And the old convent?

Jonas. Aye, aye, every hole and corner—But just now, thro' an old casement, I spied such a Nun, 'twou'd move the pity of a shark—At first I thought her merry as a grig—she ran round and round like carp in a stew pond—then flounce she flapp'd down as dull as a stock fish.

Com. Can you conduct me to the window, friend?

Jonas. There, that's it!—but if she sees you, she'll dart away like a pike.

Com. Lucky accident! come with me for a ladder instantly.—But is she so very beautiful?

Jonas. The prettiest creature you ever saw; I doubt whether she mayn't rival Nannette.

A I R. (*Jonas.*)

What a skin, not a wrinkle,
Oh how her eyes twinkle,
Ods fish I believe she's as pretty as Nan;
Oh! did you but view her,
(I wish that you knew her)
You'd cry how I pity the poor fisherman.

Her eyes darted thro' me;
This Nun will undo me;
Yet how can I ever forget my Nannette?
No! nor the Nun neither;
So e'en give me either,
Ah! Jonas, 'tis all fish that comes to thy net.

[*Exeunt.*]

Carline at the Window in Boy's Cloaths.

Car. Yes, I'll accept his offer to escape,; for that implies no more—Imprison'd thus, why shou'd I hesitate to use such means as providence has furnish'd?—Hark! he comes—a stranger with him.

[*Retires from the window.*]

Enter Commandant and Jonas, (with a Ladder.)

Jonas. There, the window is open, Sir.

Com. Now for the ladder.

Jonas. Now then for Nannette.

[*The Commandant goes up, and Jonas sings.*]

S O N G. (*Jonas.*)

Here we go up,
And now we get in,
And now we get in,
As glib as an eel.

Oh, what rare fun to pry
Into the nunnery :
Sure never man yet won
Such a fair Nun.

Here we go up—we go—Toll de roll la radi ;
Here we go up—we go—Toll de roll loll.

[*Commandant gets in at the window, pulls the ladder in after him.*]

Jonas. How ! left in the lurch ? Caught in my own net ? well, a very gudgeon, faith !——The next time I embark in the same boat with a Commandant, may I be gorged with my own tackle—I'll stick in his gills.

[*Exit into the boat.*]

SCENE V. *Convent.*

Enter Carline.

Car. Why shou'd I dread the stings of calumny ?
No ! to regain my natural rights I fly,
And conscious innocence shall be my shield.

S O N G. (*Carline.*)

Oh ! joyous day, oh ! happy hour !
Oh ! Fortune, now I own thy power ;
With joy confess thy sovereign sway,
And fly thy summons to obey :
No more we dread the convent's doom,
The fatal veil, the cloyster's gloom.

Enter Commandant.

Com. My charmer dress'd and ready for a flight ?

Car. Yes ; ready for a flight—(or two perhaps—for
I shall

I shall fly as fast from you when once I am out of this prison. [*Aside.*]

Com. Delay, my love, is dangerous, let us be gone.

Car. But whither, Sir?

Com. Leave that to me; I can provide a place in the castle where none can trace your steps.

Car. Nor I retrace my own perhaps. [*Aside.*] Is there no other way?

Com. No, none, my angel; for I am confin'd to constant residence to guard the Iron Mask.

Car. I hear so much of this Iron Mask, I must learn who it is.

Com. We lose our time.

Car. Sir, you lose yours in trying to persuade me; not a step will I stir till you tell me.

Com. Well, well—'tis a youth kept in an iron mask. Sure you cannot care about a stranger—from, the Lord knows where—Auvergne, I think.

Car. Auvergne! Oh Heavens! that name alone suffices to endear the Mask [*Aside*—I must behold him.

Com. My life depends on secrecy.

Car. My stirring hence depends upon your promise.

Com. Well, then, you have it.

D U E T. (Commandant and Carline.)

Commandant.

My love, from hour to hour,

Why will you thus delay?

My love, my Carline, why will you thus delay?

Carline.

Ah! were it in my power,

I shou'd be soon away.

Com.

Both love and time now favour.

Car.

Oh, happy, joyful measure.

Com.

Then you'll no longer waver?

Car.

Why shou'd I? Oh, what pleasure!

Com.

Com. You'll come, then?

Car. Yes.

Com. You will not fail, then?

Car. No, I will not fail,

Com. Come, then.

Car. No,

Com. No?

Car. Yes, &c.

Com.

What joy! oh, what delight, oh!
Oh! what true joy I prove.

Car. (*Afide.*)

Excuse a little falsehood, you
Who know the tricks of love.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

SCENE I. *A Chamber in the Convent.**Enter Abbess and Nannette.**Abbess.*

WELL, Nannette, have you tried the means I thought of? Your swain, the fisherman, sees all that passes near the castle.

Nan. This morning Jonas tapp'd against the casement, so I peep'd out in hopes of having a little conversation with him about this Iron Mask,

S O N G, (Nannette.)

There stood Jonas at the window
All in tears, begging, sighing, and sobbing, oh;
So, says I, who's that below;
Pray what do you want, good Fisherman?—
Dear Mrs. Nannette, indeed 'tis no sin,
Open the window, love, let poor Jonas in—
No, Master Jonas, no—no, Master Jonas, no;
No, Fisherman.

Well, quoth Jonas, then I vow,
(Marching off pouting, all in a huff, you know)
Then 'tis time to make my bow—
The sooner the better, good Fisherman—
Yet, Mrs. Nannette, one word ere you leave me;
Won't you stop? well, to-morrow I hope you'll receive me—
No, Master Jonas, no—no, Master Jonas, no;
No, Fisherman.

Abbess. So you learnt nothing from Jonas—then I'll employ Carline to worm this secret out of the Commandant, for I would sooner allow him to see her, than remain in ignorance—If I live I will get to the bottom of it. Have you confined Carline to her closet?

Nan. Yes, that I have, and brought away the key.

Enter Teresa.

Teresa. Oh, Madam, I bring the saddest news—

Abbess.

Abbess. What, child?

Teresa. Oh horrible, impious sacrilege; oh, treacherous, profligate wretch!

Abbess. Who? what? when? where?

Teresa. Carline, Madam — Carline is gone, escap'd, run away!

Abbess. Mercy on me! Carline escap'd! — tell me quick, what have you learnt of her flight?

Teresa. Only that it was out of the window into the castle ditch; but whether with the Commandant or the Fisherman, or how; whether she flew or ran, or fall'd or swam, I can't tell.

Abbess. Come, children, let us pursue her without delay—we'll find her, if on earth—the castle shall not protect her. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Inside of the Castle.*

Mask discovered sleeping.

Enter Commandant and Carline.

Com. I've kept my word. See there, he sleeps.

Car. Oh, what a noble form! sure that disguise Conceals a countenance that wou'd bespeak High birth. Poor wretch! Heaven rest his soul!

Com. 'Tis the first rest that I've been witness to Since his confinement.

Car. Oh! what a heart have you To hold such an employment.

Com. But see, he wakes! away! [*Exeunt.*]

Mask. Oh, that these eyes had been for ever clos'd!

SONG. (*Mask.*)

From dismal dreams I wake to woe;
Scarce doth my sight return, when lo!
Where'er mine anguish'd eye-balls roll,
In vision's horror haunts my soul.

And now—ah me! across the gloom
A beam of light angelic shone;
A lovely ray; alas, 'tis gone!
Thus hope, sweet hope, the prison's doom,
Delights to cheer; and fancy fair
E'en here, e'en here, forbids despair.

D

Is this my regal chair—my throne?
 This dungeon all the vast domain
 O'er which one day I hop'd to reign?
 Yet hope, sweet hope, each wretch's groan
 Delights to cheer; and vital air
 E'en here, e'en here, forbids despair.

In this dread silent solitude I soon
 Shou'd lose all memory of this world, and sink
 In apathy; but for those charms, that grace,
 Whose inexhaustible variety
 Is food for endless contemplation.

Enter Turnkey.

Turn. Contemplation! sure your honour can't want that here. I'm order'd to prepare whatever your honour wants; and if 'tis contemplation, I think I have in my own patronage as much to grant by virtue of this key, as your honour can wish for.

Mask. My friend, you strangely misconceive my words,

Or else, as I judge by your countenance,
 You are pleas'd to jest.

Turn. I am sorry, Sir, I have not the same means to judge of your pleasantry, and return the compliment—out cou'd I see the effect, I dare be sworn the muscles of your face will change, when you hear what a rare damsel you are about to see; she has so wheedled our Commandant, that he has consented to let her see your honour's mask—but that it mayn't be said that petticoats are seen in the castle, he has dress'd her up like a young huntsman. Pray don't smoke the boy.

Mask. You say she is young and fair.

Turn. Aye, food for contemplation—I'll send her (*shout*)—but I fear these shouts will interrupt your private meditations. *[Exit.*

Mask. 'Tis strange the General should give consent
 At peril of his life—and why this girl
 Shou'd be so urgent to obtain this leave.
 Oh, my Carline! cou'd I see thee in lieu of her!
 But Oh! to see thee thus—then to disclose
 Myself, wou'd forfeit thy dear life.—Hark! hark!
 She comes.

[Carline enters, and passes over the stage, looking with curiosity and fear at the Mask.

Mask.

Mask. Oh Heavens! Oh Heavens! what vision
mocks my sight!
'Tis gone! Oh, cruel dream, thus to delude
My longing eyes.

Re-enter Carline.

Again!—nay, then, 'tis she!

Car. Oh fear not, gentle prisoner, you see
I'm but a stripling, a poor helpless boy,
Without the power or wish to do you harm.

Mask. (Aside.) If I refrain, my heart will burst, and if
I speak, 'tis death.

Car. Why turn you from me, Sir?
Oh! let not shame cause silence; let the shame
Fall on their heads who cou'd invent, or have
The heart to use such studied cruelty.

Mask. (Aside.) Her gentle nature could not stand
the shock.

Car. Nay, then, perhaps I trespass—I'll retire. (*going*)

Mask. Oh, stay, my Carline, hear thy brother's voice!

Car. My brother! Ha!

DUET. (*Carline and Mask.*)

Mask.

Oh, Carline, stay, flee not away.

Carline.

Oh Heavens! Oh no, it cannot be.

Mask.

Thus may this day my woes repay.

Carline.

That form—'tis so—yes, yes, 'tis he.

Enter Commandant.

Com. How! known to each other! and in transports
too!

All hopes of her cut off—My life at stake!

His, then, must be the forfeit. (*Draws at the Mask.*)

[*Carline presents a pistol at the Commandant.*]

Com. Ha! is it thus! (*stamps*)

[*Enter Officer and Soldiers.*

Seize and confine them to their several cells.
Bring forth the cage of iron for the Mask;
And for that other find the lowest vault,
Deep under ground, where neither light nor air
Can penetrate.

TRIO. Officer, Mask, and Carline.

Mask.

Torn from thee, Carline, must these eyes
So soon resign the glorious prize?
For me no joys but in thy fight!
Then welcome death, eternal night!

Carline.

Ah! must I lose thee thus, my soul!
Oh, cruel fate!—just Heaven controul
The tyrant's rage—oh, yet give ear;
In mercy hear a wretch's prayer!

Officer.

No more; prepare to meet thy doom.
There, in that dungeon's deepest gloom,
Thou never more shalt see the day.
Haste, haste, begone—away, away.

[*Exeunt Officer, Mask, and Carline.*

Enter an Officer.

Officer. Prepare, Sir, for defence—the fort is attack'd,
And all the town surrounds the ramparts.
The general cry is against your life.

Corr. Haste, then—be gone;—collect the garrison;
Fall on; spare not a man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. A Street.

Enter Mob.

1st Citizen. Neighbours and friends, are you then
all determin'd to release this noble pris'ner? Speak out,
my lads.

2d Citizen.

2d Citizen. Aye, aye, speak out like men, openly and handsomely.

3d Citizen. That we will! we--e--'ll get him o--out of this old castle, or not le--e--eave one stone upon another in it, I vow, if it is the la-a-a-ft word I ever f--peak.

Jonas. If you call that speaking, I hope it will be your last word indeed; I thought we shou'd have waited till doomsday for your last word.

Enter Abbess.

Abbess. What's all this disturbance? are you coming to pull my house down?

Jonas. No, no, we have other fish to fry.

Lawyer. Come, come, to business. Gentlemen of the Committee of Infurrection, I humbly move you, being clearly of opinion that the detention of the Iron Mask is illegal, that we proceed in an orderly manner to sue out his habeas corpus.—If we can't have his face, at least, we'll have his body.

Abbess. The Iron Mask!—Oh lud! who is he? Aye, aye, deliver him, and I'll assist you, that I will—Well, I'm glad it's no worse; I thought you were come to release all my nuns.

Jonas. No, there's no need of us for that; they'll release themselves, never fear.

Lawyer. It will not be long, Mrs. Abbess, before your nunery,
Yea all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
And, like the traceless passage of his wherry,
Leave not a nun behind.

Jonas. No, leave none behind.

[*Enter Turnkey.*

Ah, my friend!

Turn. For Heaven's sake, Jonas, don't acknowledge me.

Jonas. What tho' I do swim at the top just now;
What tho' a shoal of friends be at my tail,
No man shall say that Jonas e'er disown'd
His friend.

Turn. Oh! mercy, Jonas, mercy!

Jonas. Why I be not asham'd of thee because thou happenest to be turnkey.

All the Mob. The Turnkey! the Turnkey! the Turnkey!—Hang him! hang him! hang him!

Man Cook. Hanging is too good for him; make mince meat of him.

Turn. What! would you eat me up?

Jonas. Rot him, a tough old porpus; let him go; he is neither fish nor flesh.

Turn. Thanks, countrymen; I'm at your service.

Jonas. Give us, then, your keys; we hear there is store of good provisions in your castle. The Iron Mask, we hear, lives upon ragouts, and pattées.

Turn. Ragouts! aye, aye, you shall have my keys; but for the pattées you'll find in our old castle, much good may do you, unless your stomachs are like ostriches; plenty of iron grates and bars; or if your teeth are like the stone-eater's, you'll find a deal of crust to crack in our old walls.

Jonas. Depend upon it, if we shew our teeth we bite; come, master Turnkey, make good use of your keys, or else you may chance to dangle like a bunch of 'em at your own door.—(*Shout.*)—Hey dey! I believe the business is ready done to our hands—for here comes the Commandant.

Enter Officer.

Officer. File off there!—Stand back, you fisherman.

Jonas. What do you think I can run backwards like a crab?—So proud of your red coat, you boil'd lobster. There he comes, poor gentleman, mute as a fish.—Friend Turnkey, won't you speak to your old master? see, he's coming.

Turn. I've no farther business with culprits when they are got without my gates; besides, I've slip'd my neck out of the collar. All's holiday with me now—What's a key without a lock—a jailor and no jail?

[*Throws down keys and Exit.*]

Jonas. Say no more, but shove your boat off.

Enter Commandant and Gentlemen.

Com. The day is yours, but let not frantic zeal
Transport your mind from liberty to licence;
Let justice then prevail.—In justice now,
I must unfold a secret which lies hid:
Deep in the lowest cell; seek there a youth,
Pent in an iron cage—his face disguis'd
In rivets of strong steel: and in a vault,

A maid

A maid in man's attire ; her name's unknown
 But for the youth—know all—His birth is royal.
 Hast ere too late ; pluck off that foul disguise—
 Behold the features of your regal stock ;
 A front that speaks the lineage whence he sprang.
[Exeunt Commandant and Gentlemen.]

SONG. *By an Officer.*

Neighbours, friends, with bosoms glowing,
 Ever panting to be free,
 Generous hearts, with zeal o'erflowing,
 Crown this day with liberty.

Chorus. Then join the chorus, lads rejoice,
 The day is all our own ;
 Hark, to the call, 'tis Freedom's voice,
 And liberty we'll crown.

Thus shall we be great and glorious,
 Tyranny and tortures cease ;
 Thus shall justice be victorious,
 Freedom, harmony, and peace.

Chorus. Then join, &c.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *Ruins of the Castle.*

*The Mob bring forward Mask (unmasked) and Carline—
 Abbess, Nannette, Nuns, &c. follow from the Top.*

Mask. Thus to be blest—my natural form restor'd—
 My liberty—my love ! what farther gift
 Cou'd Heav'n bestow on us ?

*[Temple of Liberty rises from among the Ruins
 of the Castle.]*

Such are the joys of liberty and love !
 Oh ! may they ever thus triumphant prove :
 Last unimpair'd thro' each succeeding age,
 And fill the last recording angel's page.

F I N A L E.

Carilne.

Thus, at length, the storm blown over,
 Sun beams bright, and calms succeed :
 Thus thro' dreary wilds each rover
 Finds at last the flowery mead.

Nun.

Nannette.

Thus, joys withheld encrease the fire,
Torments often pleasures breed;
Each mortal ill, each fierce desire,
Of its cure contains the seed.

Mask.

Thus may each faithful, constant lover
From his cruel fate be freed;
Thus, when oppress'd, may he discover
His true love—his friend in need.



FINIS.

